REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 16-20, 24, and 25 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 4-7 have been amended to specify that the claimed method is implemented by a machine, namely, a computer. Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claim 24 and claim 16 has been amended to include the features of claim 25. Claims 1 and 16 also have been amended to specify that the integrated user interface enables performance monitoring of the operations workflow. Claims 24 and 25 have been canceled. Therefore, claims 1-7 and 16-20 will be pending in the application after entry of the foregoing claim amendments. Support for the amendments is found in the specification, drawings, and claims as originally filed (see, for example, specification paragraphs [0030] and [0034] and Figure 3). Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added by these amendments.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C § 112

Claims 1-7, 16-20, 24 and 25 stand finally rejected under 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants have amended the claims in an Amendment response filed April 6, 2009 to further clarify the claimed subject matter. In an Advisory Action mailed April 13, 2009, the examiner indicated that the April 6, 2009, Amendment had been entered, so those changes are presumed to be entered and are not reflected in the above amendments.

As noted in the April 6, 2009, response, Applicants have amended the claims to clarify that it is the "workflow process engine" that is implemented in a same processor with the rules engine. This feature is clear from the description of Figure 3. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-7 and 16-20, as amended, are not indefinite. Claims 24 and 25 have been canceled. Applicants respectfully request, therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-7, 16-20, 24 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C § 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 16, 17, 19, 20, 24 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable as obvious over U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0195762 (hereinafter

"Gleason") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 7,124,145 (hereinafter "Surasinghe"). Claims 24 and 25 have been canceled, thereby obviating the rejection with respect to claims 24 and 25. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of the remaining claims.. Although Applicants believe that the present claims patentably define over Gleason in view of Surasinghe, Applicants again have amended the claims to further clarify the claimed subject matter.

The cited portions of Gleason and Surasinghe fail to disclose or suggest the specific combination of claim 1. For example, the cited portions of Gleason and Surasinghe fail to disclose or suggest that the rules engine and the workflow process engine are implemented in a same processor, and that the business rules are changed and the changed business rules are applied during execution of the workflow without stopping execution of the workflow, as recited in claim 1. Gleason and Surasinghe also do not disclose or suggest "providing a correlation between the business rules applied to the nodes and the corresponding affected operations to provide tracking of operations within the workflow, the correlation being provided by implementing an integrated interface control layer that provides an integrated user interface to the business rules engine and the workflow process engine for enabling performance monitoring of the operations workflow" as now recited in claim 1.

Applicants submit that Gleason fails to disclose a rules engine and a workflow process engine implemented in a same processor for performance monitoring of the operations workflow as now claimed. The cited portions of Gleason disclose that a process engine is run on an application server and that the process engine is responsible for executing the work flow process. The cited portions of Gleason further disclose that the process engine "provides a process designer that handles generation and editing of business processes and process rulesets." See Gleason, ¶ 82. However, a thorough reading of Gleason fails to disclose or suggest that the rules engine (of business objects 38) is integrated with the process engine 18, in a same processor to permit performance monitoring of the operations workflow as now claimed. Applicant again submits that Gleason merely describes the type of work flow process engine/process rules engine interface as described as prior art in the present application. The cited portions of Surasinghe, likewise fail to disclose this feature. Thus, the cited portions of Gleason and Surasinghe fail to disclose or suggest at least one feature of claim 1.

Additionally, the cited portions of Gleason and Surasinghe fail to disclose or suggest changing the business rules and applying the changed business rules during execution of the workflow without stopping execution of the workflow, as recited in claim 1.

The Office Action mailed on January 6, 2009 (Office Action) states that Gleason "does not expressly teach the limitation of without stopping the execution of the workflow." Instead, the Office Action relies on Surasinghe as disclosing this feature. See Office Action, page 8, ¶3. The cited portions of Surasinghe disclose the following.

> The invention is a system for dynamically integrating changes in the rules governing business operations into an application program that implements the rules in order to control business operations. The system includes a dynamic business logic rule integrator ("DBLRI") that essentially provides business logic rules to the application software as executable routines. When new rules and revised rules are written, the DBLRI provides new routines and the application software readily incorporates the new and/or revised rules by calling the routines at the appropriate times.

(Surasinghe, col. 2, lines 42-51).

The Office Action states that the disclosure of dynamically integrating rule changes implies the claimed feature of changing the business rules and applying the changed business rules during execution of the workflow without stopping execution of the workflow. However, a thorough reading of Surasinghe makes clear that the disclosed feature in Surasinghe of dynamically integrating rule changes relates only to the ability to integrate new rules without re-writing or re-compiling the application software. See Surasinghe, col. 2, line 66-col. 3, line 2; col. 3, lines 40-43 and 55-60; and col. 4, lines 54-58.

Moreover, as further disclosed in Surasinghe, the DBLRI translates executable routines, comprising user-specified rules, into executable parse trees or DLLs, which are then available to the application program. In this regard, Surasinghe discloses the following.

> As discussed in more detail below, the DBLRI provides to a user one or more interfaces through which the user writes expressions for business logic rules in a functional language that, as discussed in more detail below, allows the user to specify the rules essentially as executable routines. The DBLRI then translates the functional language expressions into executable parse trees or DLLs, which are then available to the application program.

(Surasinghe, col. 2, lines 51-59).

Surasinghe fails to disclose or imply changing the business rules and applying the changed business rules during execution of the workflow without stopping execution of the workflow as claimed. Rather, in Surasinghe the execution of the application software is stopped in order to load the executable parse trees and DLLs (i.e., the executable parse trees and DLLs provided by the DBLRI are loaded at runtime).

Thus, the cited portions of Gleason and Surasinghe, alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest this additional feature of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable for at least the reasons noted above.

Claims 2, 3, 5, and 7 depend from claim 1, which Applicants have shown to be allowable. Accordingly, claims 2, 3, 5, and 7 are also allowable, at least by virtue of their dependence from claim 1.

The subject matter of claim 1 discussed above is similarly recited in independent claim 16. Therefore, claim 16 is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claims 17, 19, and 20 depend from claim 16, which Applicants have shown to be allowable. Accordingly, claims 17, 19, and 20 are also allowable, at least by virtue of their dependence from claim 16.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 5, 7, 16, 17, 19, and 20 patentably define over Gleason and Surasinghe. Applicants respectfully request, therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 7, 16, 17, 19, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Claims 4 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable as obvious over Gleason in view of U.S. Pat. No. 7,174,342 (hereinafter "Scheurich"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Claims 4 and 18 depend from claims 1 and 16, which Applicants have shown to be allowable over Gleason. Scheurich was cited in the Office Action as allegedly disclosing constructing a delayed query to evaluate at least one of the business rules, the query delayed in the workflow process such that the query is executed over a data set smaller than a full sized data set whereby a time-efficient query results. See Office Action, page 11, ¶ 6.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited portions of Scheurich fail to remedy the deficiencies of Gleason as discussed above. Accordingly, claims 4 and 18 are also allowable, at least by virtue of their dependence from claims 1 and 16.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 4 and 18 patentably define over Gleason and Scheurich. Applicants respectfully request, therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 4 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Finally, claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable as obvious over Gleason in view of "An operational approach to the design of workflow systems" ("Agarwal"). Claim 6 depends from claim 1, which Applicants have shown to be allowable over Gleason. Agarwal was cited in the Office Action as allegedly disclosing utilizing at least one declarative if/then statement. See Office Action, page 13, ¶ 2. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited portions of Agarwal fail to remedy the deficiencies of Gleason as discussed above. Accordingly, claim 6 is also allowable, at least by virtue of its dependence from claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 6 patentably defines over Gleason and Agarwal. Applicants respectfully request, therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are allowable and that the present application is in condition for allowance. Entry of the above amendments, reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. In the event that the Examiner cannot allow the present application for any reason, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney, Michael P. Dunnam, at (215) 564-8962 to discuss the resolution of any remaining issues.

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